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/Pl. I faces p. 145./

The last group of Uru Indians living in the village of Iru-Itu, or Angoake, on the banks of the Desaguadero, about 25 kilometers from Lake Titicaca, has almost entirely disappeared in the course of the last years.

A long period of drought between 1940 and 1945 has lowered the level of Lake Titicaca by more than three meters; at many points the water has receded several hundred meters.

At the time of my first trip in 1938, the village of Iru-Itu had about 100 inhabitants; the Desaguadero went through vast swamps dotted with numerous ponds and lagoons with a great abundance of totora beds /totorales/. In 1941 a plain of sterile sand had replaced the swamps and fields of reeds; the Desaguadero was reduced to a narrow, muddy ditch.

Because of this the Uru have lost practically all their means of existence. The swamps covered with reeds, the totora beds, furnished them with the Scirpus necessary to make their fishing balsas and to cover their houses and served as shelter for numerous aquatic fauna: fish, suches (Trichomycterus dispar and rivulatus), bogas, hispe, carache (various Orestias), and birds sought by the Indians for their meat and eggs. Their entire economy, based partly on hunting and fishing and partly on the sale of totora fishing balsas and mats to the neighboring Indians, has thus been destroyed.

Many of the Uru are dead. Others, the young ones, have dispersed, mingling with the neighboring Aymara groups; some have joined the Lake Titicaca fishers. The old ones, more attached to their customs and their /146/ traditions and incapable of adapting themselves to new conditions of existence, have remained in the dead village.

In 1944 most of the houses had been abandoned; the totora roofs could not be repaired for lack of reeds, and many had given way. Only 21 people remained in the village; several women were of Aymara origin, and the few children were in part Uru-Aymara half-breeds.

3:Vellard--6a D,E-5 (1938-1944) 1949 SF24 Uru SF24

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3. A typical house in Iru-Itu in 1938.

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4. The same house in 1942: the high roof of totoras shaped like a keel has collapsed and can no longer be repaired.

[16th Century]

/33 cont./

175 Neighboring Pueblos, and he removed and resettled them:
68 The damage they caused in the places where they were /re-
728 settled/ was such, since they stole all they could, that the
579 inhabitants, unable to bear with it, asked Casiracapa to rid them of those people, because they robbed them, ate their livestock, and were not useful in any way whatsoever; the Captain advised the Inca of this and he was ordered to return them to the Lake from which he had removed them, and to threaten them with the death penalty if they were to leave it;
[101] these people of whom I speak are called Uros, the lake where
[131] they were found is that of Paria where they are now plying their old trade, which is to steal and to eat; some have set up small
[269] villages, and they go out to steal, and it is astonishing what is said of these Indians, that they steal from the herders who live there a haul of pigs and eat it in one night, which if so many people did not attest to it would not be believable; I have ascertained that three Indians stole 12 sheep from the area and ate them in two days without leaving anything usable: they are infidels in addition, Your Excellency would perform a great service to Our Lord by removing them from there so
[356] that they and their descendants might become Christians, and giving them lodgings of some sort because their foul dwellings defy description. /Translated from the Spanish./

(Document contributed by Dr. Raul Porras Barrenechea.)

175 Visita de los Indios de la Provincia de Chuquito que estan en cabeza de S. M. Lima, 1568. /Visit of the Indians of the Province of Chuquito Who Are on the Register of H. M. Lima, 1568/.

[19] This document from the General Archives of the Indies in Seville (A.G.I.), Justicia section, File No. 479, was analyzed by Marie Helmer in these Travaux, III, pp. 115-150, 1951.